

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (Original) A polishing apparatus including a polishing object holding mechanism for holding a polishing object to be polished, and a table having a polishing surface, wherein the polishing object held by said polishing object holding mechanism is pressed against the polishing surface of said table and polished by relative movement between the polishing object held by said polishing object holding mechanism and the polishing surface of said table,

wherein an elastic sheet is stretched over an upper surface of said table, and a polishing pad having a polishing surface on an upper side thereof is replaceably stretched over said elastic sheet.

Claim 2 (Original) A polishing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said elastic sheet has a plurality of projections on a surface thereof.

Claim 3 (Original) A polishing apparatus including a polishing object holding mechanism for holding a polishing object to be polished, and a table having a polishing surface, wherein the polishing object held by said polishing object holding mechanism is pressed against the polishing surface of said table and polished by relative movement between the polishing object held by said polishing object holding mechanism and the polishing surface of said table,

wherein a recess is provided on an upper surface of said table, and an opening of said recess is covered with an elastic sheet to form a fluid chamber, said fluid chamber being filled with a fluid under a predetermined pressure, and a polishing pad having a polishing surface on an upper side thereof is replaceably stretched over said elastic sheet.

Claim 4 (Original) A polishing apparatus according to claim 3, which is provided with a fluid supply section that supplies the fluid to said fluid chamber, wherein said elastic sheet is deformable according to a supply pressure of the fluid supplied from said fluid supply section.

Claim 5 (Original) A polishing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said fluid supply section includes a fluid path and a fluid source for supplying the fluid, said fluid source having a control part that controls the supply pressure of the fluid.

Claim 6 (Original) A polishing apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said table has a plurality of pistons between said elastic sheet and said polishing pad, and a piston guide plate that limits a direction of movement of said pistons, said pistons being guided by said piston guide plate so as to move in a direction perpendicular to the polishing surface of said polishing pad in response to deformation of said elastic sheet.

Claim 7 (Original) A polishing apparatus including a polishing object holding mechanism for holding a polishing object to be polished, and a table having a polishing surface, wherein the polishing object held by said polishing object holding mechanism is pressed against the polishing surface of said table and polished by relative movement between the polishing object held by said polishing object holding mechanism and the polishing surface of said table,

wherein an elastic sheet having a plurality of recesses is stretched over an upper surface of said table so that a fluid is sealed in between said elastic sheet and the upper surface of said table, and a polishing pad having a polishing surface on an upper side thereof is replaceably stretched over said elastic sheet.

Claim 8 (Original) A polishing apparatus including a polishing object holding mechanism for holding a polishing object to be polished, and a table having a polishing surface, wherein the polishing object held by said polishing object holding mechanism is pressed against the polishing surface of said table and polished by relative movement between the polishing object held by said polishing object holding mechanism and the polishing surface of said table,

wherein said table is formed by a belt suspended between pulleys, and wherein an elastic sheet is stretched over an upper surface of said belt, and a polishing pad having a polishing surface on an upper side thereof is replaceably stretched over said elastic sheet.

Claim 9 (New) A polishing apparatus including a polishing object holding mechanism for holding a polishing object to be polished, and a table having a polishing surface, wherein the polishing object held by said polishing object holding mechanism is pressed against the polishing surface of said table and polished by relative movement between the polishing object held by said polishing object holding mechanism and the polishing surface of said table,

said polishing apparatus comprising:

an elastic sheet placed over an upper surface of said table;

a retaining member for securing said elastic sheet; and

a polishing pad placed over said elastic sheet, said polishing pad having a polishing surface on an upper side thereof.

Claim 10 (New) A polishing apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said retaining member is disposed at an outer edge portion and a central portion of said table.

Claim 11 (New) A polishing apparatus including a polishing object holding mechanism for holding a polishing object to be polished, and a table having a polishing surface, wherein the polishing object held by said polishing object holding mechanism is pressed against the polishing surface of said table and polished by relative movement between the polishing object held by said polishing object holding mechanism and the polishing surface of said table,

said polishing apparatus comprising:

a recess-shaped fluid chamber provided annularly on an upper surface of said table;

a fluid path for supplying a fluid to said fluid chamber:

a rotary joint for supplying a pressure fluid to said fluid path;

an elastic sheet provided over said fluid chamber, said elastic sheet being deformable according to a supply pressure of the fluid supplied from said fluid path; and

a polishing pad placed over said elastic sheet, said polishing pad having a polishing surface on an upper side thereof.